

tics; in the second half it provides twenty case studies with controversy, alternatives, and the asking of value questions. Examples of case study themes are: pesticides, birth control, noise, nuclear wastes, heavy metals, solid wastes, the automobile, and food additives. Forty-nine reviewers pored over small and large segments of the material to assure accuracy and up-to-dateness. Moreover, opposing arguments about controversial subjects are intentionally included. It was designed as a college text—but better than most—and would be useful for us to assign or have available to discuss with all undergraduate and graduate students with which we work. It lists 2500 references for even more detailed information on a specific subject. Certainly it should be in our libraries. In fact its greatest weakness is simply that it is not published in paperback. Yet this monumental interdisciplinary text is well worth the price and the time.

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***On Behalf of Children*, William Hetz-  
necker and Marc A. Forman. NY:  
Grune & Stratton, 1974, 232 pp, \$9.75  
paperback.**

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Written by two child psychiatrists about their hard-won programs in the first decade of Community Mental Health, this book is a landmark in the application of public health principles to child development in a high risk community. As such it commands the respect of those who work in social welfare, education, and corrections as well as the obvious audience in health and clinical behavioral sciences.

In the preface the authors declare that "an integrated curriculum including the sweep of social science from history and anthropology to social psychology and public administration are more important in the formation of the mind of a physician than cell biology or gross anatomy." They experienced and thought a great deal about common, garden-variety problems of people in a part of Philadelphia where there are no gardens. Listening hard and talking straight to parents, children, teachers, official and unofficial helpers, bureaucratic yea-and-nay sayers these relatively young pioneers display their rosy visions, their almost perfect hindsight, and an occasional black eye.

The book is divided into sections on clinical services, consultation, and new manpower resources. The first part describes the change of a traditional child guidance clinic into a child and family program in a community mental health center. The second part explicates the consultation process in schools, a day diagnostic center, and a department of public welfare. The third section takes up parent education, mental health assistants, the "Black Brother" pro-

gram involving high school boys with younger ones, and the "incentive specialist" program which placed paraprofessionals in selected seventh grade classrooms. The book ends with a personal and philosophical overview. It contains an amusing glossary, "reverent and irreverent," which, like the whole approach, is free of pomp and jargon.

The book repays careful reading. Although clearly written, it is densely packed, and takes time. There are gems of wisdom and refreshing light touches, but the true story of eight years of gradual innovation doesn't read like a novel. The authors dispute the common shibboleth in mental health "that the expression of feelings under any and all circumstances is a general mental health vitamin." Thank goodness! Laying another myth to rest: "the paraprofessional is interested in theory. She is interested in the 'why' behind behavior. . . . The professional who teaches and works with paraprofessionals had best be ready to shed his use of jargon for the nakedness of common words. Nakedness is embarrassing and liberating at the same time. . . . Making ourselves vulnerable in any relationship invites and challenges the same possibility in another." (p. 163).

With this book in hand, no one can say any more that we lack program ideas for children in mental health centers, or that consultation is too vague a concept, or that paraprofessional training is too difficult. The authors did what they did the hard way, and they made headway for the rest of us. They watched the social programs of the sixties shrink away, but their work was always an uphill struggle and its story will have value for a long, long time.

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***World Without Cancer; The Story of Vita-  
min B<sub>17</sub>*. G. Edward Griffin. American  
Media, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1974,  
Parts I-II, 526 pages.**

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This book is written as an endorsement of Laetrile, which is also known as Vitamin B<sub>17</sub>, as a possible prophylactic and therapeutic agent against cancer. Laetrile is currently banned by the FDA in the United States for anti-cancer use.

The stated hypothesis is that cancer, like scurvy or pellagra, is a deficiency disease caused by the lack of an essential food element in the modern diet, specifically B<sub>17</sub>. Although it was not necessary for the purpose of this exposition, the author also defends the unaccepted anti-cancer drug, Krebiozen. (Yet, Krebiozen and Laetrile have nothing in common.) It should be stated that this reviewer, at the time that Krebiozen was being evaluated over a decade ago, was Head of the Laboratory and Clinical Trials Section of the National Cancer Institute and a member of the panel which disapproved

the request for a clinical trial for Krebiozen. The grounds for rejection of Krebiozen were that, for specific sites of cancer, it was demonstrably less effective than accepted medical practice and thus prevented patients from receiving the best available mode of therapy.

The author maintains that the missing food nutrient is part of the nitriloside family which is found particularly in the seeds of the fruit family containing bitter almond, apricot, etc. It is also contained in grasses, maize, sorghum, millet and other foods generally not plentiful in the modern diet.

The theory behind the claimed anti-carcinogenic activity of vitamin B<sub>17</sub> is as follows: Cancer is an over-healing process. The body normally produces trophoblast cells to overcome specific damage to or to prevent the aging of normal tissues. However, under certain conditions, the trophoblast cells are allowed to undergo uncontrolled proliferation. One condition is when the pancreas is weak; the other is when the kinds of foods we eat consume all of the pancreatic enzymes for their digestion. The role of the pancreatic enzymes in cancer control is to digest away the electronically-charged protein coat covering the trophoblast cell thus exposing it to the white blood cells for disposal. According to the author, the B<sub>17</sub> molecule contains four components: two units of glucose, a unit of benzaldehyde and one of cyanide. These last two compounds act synergistically against the cancer cell and only the cancer cell contains an enzyme which breaks down this B<sub>17</sub> molecule. Of course, this is only one of several theories of the mechanism of carcinogenesis.

The rest of Part I emphasizes the relative failure of conventional cancer therapy, (radiation, surgery and chemotherapy), to achieve significant remission rates and the markedly reduced quality of life which results from such therapy. Part II is devoted to the politics of cancer therapy and cancer research and of the organizations like the Food and Drug Administration, American Cancer Society and the American Medical Association which are opposed to the nutritional concept of the etiology of cancer. The author accepts the "conspiracy" theory, i.e. that policy-makers in the medical, pharmaceutical, research and fund-raising organizations deliberately or unconsciously strive not to prevent or cure cancer in order to perpetuate their functions.

Unfortunately, in evaluating the scientific quality of the book, one must state that the use of the anecdotal reports of remissions makes it virtually impossible to justify a proper clinical trial of Laetrile. Also, there is no objective presentation of the results of valid animal experiments which have demonstrated the efficiency of this compound. Although the book is an emotional plea for the unrestricted use of the Laetrile as an anti-tumor agent, the scientific evidence to justify such a policy does not appear within it.

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